DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 163 706 EC 112 707

AUTHOR Shaffer, Joyce D.; Bell, Jane E.
TITLE Parents and Educators: Partners in Individualized Educational Program Planning for Handicapped Students. An In-Service Training Package.
INSTITUTION Drake Univ., Des Moines, Iowa. Midwest Regional Resource Center.
SPONS AGENCY Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Aug 78
CONTRACT 300-78-0023
NOTE 84p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Due Process; *Handicapped Children; *Individualized Programs; *Inservice Programs; Parent Education; *Parent Teacher Cooperation; *Workshops

ABSTRACT

The document presents a modular in-service training package for parents and educators of handicapped children, to assist their collaboration in the development of individualized education programs (IEPs). Each of the five modules consists of descriptions of specific activities, the materials needed for the activities, and the time required to complete the module (total time is approximately 12 hours). Activities described include introduction and evaluation, plus mock IEP staffing; developing solutions for identified problems; developing effective communication and interpersonal skills by means of a jargon test and role identification exercise; indentifying timing and setting problems and their solutions; examining interaction patterns; and developing and evaluating an implementation plan. Included in the eight appendixes are a self-administered due process guide, a staffing evaluation form, and a parent's guide to information-gathering. (DLS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED163706

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

PARENTS AND EDUCATORS:

Partners in Individualized Education Program Planning for Handicapped Students

An In-Service Training Package

August, 1978

Developed by

Joyce D. Shaffer and Jane E. Bell

Sponsored by

MIDWEST REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
1332 26th Street, Drake University
Des Moines, Iowa 50311

EC112707

This document was developed pursuant to contracts with the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, contract number 300-78-0023. The opinions expressed herein, however, do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

Permission to duplicate this product is granted by the Midwest Regional Resource Center (MRRC) contingent upon the MRRC being given credit for its development.

PREFACE

Any reader of any material needs to know who is behind the voices speaking on paper if s/he is to place credibility on the message received. Who are we? We are Joyce D. Shaffer, mother of a handicapped child and an instructor in the College of Science and Humanities at Iowa State University; and Jane E. Bell, friend of the mother of a handicapped child and an instructor in the College of Education at Iowa State University. These labels say very little on the surface, but a great deal more beneath it. Each of us shares the dual role of being both a parent and an educator, giving us some empathy with the role expectations of each. As we are the best of friends, we have shared the frustration of attempting to secure the most positive education for a handicapped child and the joy of being supportive forces as Joyce tries to work through the problems associated with living with her son, Eric. Because we are human beings who believe that open communication is a key to the ultimate success of any endeavor, we share with you what we hope will be aids to increasing the quality of that communication.

This packet is best used, we believe, as a training tool for helping change agents within the educational system to work with others in the building of a positive partnership between parents and educators. Although any educator at the administrative, supportive services, or teaching level should be able to read this packet and benefit from the information and suggestions it contains, the intended audience is those who are in a position to train others to move through the process of partnership building. These people may be employed by a state department of education, on the staff of an area education association, part of a team from a regional resource center or teachers from a local school district who are designated as trainers.

We know that persons from this wide range of professional roles can creatively plan for positive change as this packet grew out of an April, 1978 conference on the IEP process at which all of the above roles were represented. The conference was sponsored by the Midwest Regional Resource Center; our presentation at that conference and this packet were developed with the cooperation of the MRRC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	i
Table of Contents	ii
Introduction	1
INITIATING ACTIVITIES	6
Activity A: Introductions and sharing of negative experiences in working with parents	7
Activity B: Name Game	7
MODULE I: THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE STUDENT	8
Activity A: Mock Staffing	9
Activity B: Developing Solutions for Identified Problems	12
Participant Materials	14
MODULE II: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS	21
Activity A: Jargon Test	22
Activity B: Role Identification	24
Activity C: Developing Interpersonal Skills	26
Participant Materials	29
MODULE III: APPROPRIATE TIMING/SETTING	38
Activity A: Identifying Timing and Setting Problems	39
Activity B: Identifying Solutions to Timing and Setting Problems	41
Activity C: Examining Interaction Patterns	42
Participant Materials	43
MODULE IV: AWARENESS INTO ACTION	48
Activity A: Developing an Implementation Plan	49
Activity B: Evaluate Plans	51
Participant Materials	52
CLOSING ACTIVITIES	54
Activity A: Closing Comments	55
Activity B: Evaluation of Workshop	56
RESOURCES	57
APPENDIX	60
Appendix I: Time Frame for Workshop	61
Appendix II: Sections of P.L. 94-142 That Relate To Parents' and Students' Rights and Responsibilities	63
Appendix III: Due Process Rights of Parents	64

Page

Appendix IV: Self-Administered Due Process Guide 65

Appendix V: Critical Information for Child Staffings (Adapted) 69

Appendix VI: Parental Survey Form: We Want to Know Your Child 71

Appendix VII: A Parent's Guide to Information-Gathering 74

Appendix VIII: Staffing Evaluation Form (Adapted) 79

INTRODUCTION

Almost every book, pamphlet or article that talks about creating a working relationship between the parents of handicapped children and educators labels these parents as though they are in a separate class. Sometimes this labeling predetermines an adversary relationship. Though it is true that parents of children who need special educational services may be both unnecessarily reluctant to send their children to school and unrealistically hopeful that miracles will take place there, these parents are more like than unlike the parents of so-called normal children. Most parents believe they are giving the schools the best kids they have to send, and most parents desire that their children receive the best education possible. Perhaps the parents of kids with troubles sometimes appear defensive because they are stalled in one of the following three stages:

1) Refusing to accept the possibility that anything could be wrong with their child and resenting bitterly anyone who suggests that the child might have or is having trouble learning.

2) Willing to admit that the child may not do or is not doing so well in school, but feel that either it's just a physical problem or if the teacher were more capable, the child would learn to do better. Parents go along with testing and even begin to follow some of the remedial recommendations, but soon lose interest when rapid improvement does not follow.

3) Recognizing honestly and realistically that their child may not or is not achieving in school as well as s/he should be and are anxious to listen to anyone who seems genuinely interested in helping the child.[1]

It may seem contradictory to refer to this third stage as a point of being stalled. The third stage is, after all, one of honest and realistic recognitions, one of genuine interest and cooperative attitudes. Many times this parental reaction is the optimum that educators strive to encourage. Heightened awareness is most definitely a positive stage, but we suggest that it is only the beginning point for parents and educators

---

[1] Harold B. Levy, M.D., Square Pegs, Round Holes: The Learning Disabled Child in the Classroom and at Home (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1973), pp. 176-177.

becoming partners in educational planning and implementation for children. It is the purpose of this packet to assist educators to involve parents, to join with them as partners not only in awareness, but in action.

Parents, like their children, are capable of growth -- the amount of which will vary. The extent to which parents become a part of the educational process for their children is dependent upon the degree to which educators are committed to the parent involvement program and to the extent to which parents are willing to be involved. Educators must recognize that they are not inviting parents to be part of the educational team; participation is every parent's right. Parents must recognize that they are not deciding to claim or reject this right; participation is their parental responsibility. Recognition of shared commitment comes easily; putting it into action is more difficult.

Joyce has been traveling throughout the midwest, speaking with and listening to parents and educators who are working to make P.L. 94-142 a useful reality. As we discussed the many problems aired at such meetings, we found that most specifics could be categorized within four broad areas of concern:

1) Knowledge of the law itself and of corresponding rules and regulations adopted by particular states. We are not specialists in the law and do not attempt to address problems of interpretation. The Appendix contains an outline of sections of P.L. 94-142 that relates to parents' and students' rights and responsibilities, a generalized outline of the due process rights of parents, and an inventory for checking compliance with generalized interpretation of P.L. 94-142.

2) Thorough knowledge of the client. An overriding fear of parents seems to be that educators do not know their child well enough to make sound recommendations about his/her educational program. Underlying this concern is a general awareness of inadequate information-gathering and feedback systems among staff members and between parents and educators.

3) Effective communication among staff members, between the parents and the agencies which are to serve their child, and, in some cases, between staff and the client they are assisting. Parents and educators share a need to be heard, to know what is expected of them, to feel that their points of view will contribute to responsible decision-making.

4) Appropriate timing/setting for parent-educator contact. Both parents and staff members are sensitive to the atmosphere surrounding their contacts with one another. Imposed schedules,

rushed meetings, uncomfortable settings, confusion as to roles, direction, and purposes add to the strain which can make itself apparent in staffings held to write IEPs or to consider placement alternatives.

Parental participation in meeting these concerns is not likely to come without encouragement; that encouragement can be initiated by educators if they receive some training to heighten their awareness of the need for parental involvement as well as some techniques for carrying it out. In-service for educators is a key component in realizing the overall goal of parents and educators becoming partners in assessment, individualized education program planning, and implementation of the IEP. This packet is designed to help you, as trainers, move from initiating activities to the addressing of each of the concerns presented above. Within each area of concern we have provided a conceptual framework within which to identify general problem areas, and a series of activities which can lead to recognition of specific difficulties and to planning of ways to overcome these difficulties.

As designers of this packet, we make the following assumptions about you as potential trainers:

1) Your role is to conduct the training sessions for educators to aid them in positively involving parents in the IEP process.

2) You are familiar with your state's rules and regulations for IEP staffing procedures as they correspond with federal legislation.

3) You understand that an IEP must contain six major content areas:

   a. A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance.

   b. A statement of annual goals specifying the behavior to be achieved through the individualized educational program.

   c. A statement of short-term objectives which serves as the steps in achieving each annual goal.

   d. A statement of the specific educational services to be provided to the student, and the extent to which the student will be able to participate in regular educational programs.

   e. The projected initiation dates of services and the anticipated duration of the services.

f. Appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures, and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short-term instructional objectives are being achieved.

We have had increased success as we have presented some sections of this packet in workshop form because we shared the responsibilities of conducting the training. You will have the best luck implementing this training process if two of you agree to work together. No packet can give the two of you a systematic way to put yourselves in tune with one another. Before you can be a successful training team, you need to talk, we mean <u>really</u> <u>talk</u>, together to familiarize yourselves with one another so that you can realize the attitudes you hold concerning parental involvement and how to best utilize it in an educational process.

It is important that you remember that good trainers are good facilitators. Your major role is to help others to identify and to deal with their shared concerns. At many points throughout the packet -- particularly at places calling for facilitator-led large group discussion -- we will indicate questions that you might raise to ensure that the discussion is fully covering ideas. We cannot build in all the important questions that should be asked; we cannot give you the answers to questions you might be asked; we cannot anticipate the direction that every discussion will take; we cannot know the alterations you might want to make. Given your knowledge of your district, your understanding of one another's viewpoint and interpretation of the packet, you have the most accurate vantage point for planning your discussions and anticipating questions of your group. Take the time to talk; it will pay off in a clearer, more valuable set of training sessions.

Many of the staffing problems which have occurred in the past were the result of poor preparation. It is for this reason that we chose to begin the training sequence with "knowledge of the student." Having established means for obtaining a sound information base, it becomes important that participants realize that information is of little use if they have no skills for sharing that information as a means to positive action.

The "knowledge of the student" section is followed by modules on: "effective communication skills," "appropriate timing/setting," and "awareness into action." Each divider page in the packet provides the

module title, materials needed, and an estimate of time needed to complete each activity. (A time frame for the entire workshop appears in Appendix I.) Each module includes introductory information for the facilitators, background and instruction for the activities, and a section of "participant materials" needed for the activities.

Although there is some flexibility built into the packet so that the training exercises can be adapted to a district's needs and time schedule for in-service sessions, we believe that the packet will be most beneficial if it is used in its entirety in the order in which it is presented. No matter what changes you make in utilizing it, under no circumstances can you realize success if the in-service dealing with parental involvement is treated as a one-day shot. In-service, like the IEP itself, is an ongoing process.

INITIATING ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS NEEDED

None

TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE INITIATING ACTIVITIES

(15 min.) *Activity A:* *Introductions and sharing of negative experiences in working with parents*

(15 min.) *Activity B:* *Name Game*

Approximately 1/2 hour for a group of fifteen participants

Initiating Activities

Each time we have presented a workshop, we have stressed that the entire series of activities is hopefully a positive model for an in-service session. We want you as trainers to share that same hope with those you are training.

Activity A: People who know one another seem to learn and grow together with more openness and more positive results, but they also sometimes hit snags as they begin to remember some negative experiences that cause them to question whether an idealistic solution will work. These are real fears, and we do not suggest they be ignored, but we have a fear that the snags people run against can cause them to plan for the lowest common denominator instead of the highest common possibility. Therefore, we suggest that a workable opening for your initial training session is for each person to introduce himself/herself by name, professional responsibilities, and, most importantly, the sharing of one negative experience which causes that individual to be hesitant about seeking a close working relationship with parents of handicapped children.

Activity B: If people in your group are not at all acquainted with one another, you may want to follow initial introductions with the Name Game:

> The person to the left of the facilitator introduces him/herself first -- "I'm Joyce Shaffer." The person to his/her left says, "This is Joyce Shaffer, and I'm Jane Bell," and so forth around the circle. The person in the last slot has the task of naming everyone in the circle, but s/he has also had the opportunity to hear the names the largest number of times. You may want to use only first names. It sets a tone of facilitator involvement if you end the Name Game by naming each person in the circle.

These activities serve two purposes: 1) the learning of everyone's name, and 2) a sharing of honest concerns before the training process begins. It is our experience that in this climate of knowing one another and sharing concerns, the process of training can begin.

MODULE I: THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE STUDENT

What are the Underlying Reasons for or Sources of the Difficulties Found in Formal Staffings?

MATERIALS NEEDED

Marking pens
Newsprint
Tape
9 Manilla file folders (attach one Mock Staffing situation to the inside of each folder)
1 Kindergarten-size table
9 Kindergarten-size chairs
1 copy (per participant) of Handout 1, "Guidelines for Successful Brainstorming"

TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE MODULE I

(15 min.)	*Activity A:*	*Mock Staffing*
(15 min.)		*Large Group Discussion - Identify Problems*
(30 min.)	*Activity B:*	*Developing Solutions for Identified Problems - small groups*
(20 min.)		*Share Responses - large group*

Approximately 1 1/2 hours

Activity A: Mock Staffing

Simulations can be useful activities for in-service sessions as they allow participants, through roles, to momentarily feel the responsibilities of another person. They also give participants opportunities to practice positive behaviors and, within a safe arena, to pinpoint areas and sources of difficulty for themselves and others. Many times we are disappointed at the outcome of simulations when they do not promote solutions to real problems. Perhaps it is wise to realize that if people could upon demand erase the negative patterns which have developed, they would have done so on their own and would not feel the need to be involved in a training session to alter present practices.

Because it has been our experience that people cannot enact a simulation using totally positive behaviors in problem areas, we give instructions for conducting a mock IEP staffing, the sole purpose of which is to present a compounding of poor procedures for participants and onlookers to identify. It is artificial to the extent that it would be a rare staffing in which all of these problems would occur; it is realistic to the extent that it would be a rare educator who could say that s/he had ever been involved in a staffing in which none of these problems occurred.

Some time prior to the mock staffing you should select nine people to play the respective roles in the IEP staffing -- preferably not their actual professional roles. You facilitators have the most control over the time taken for the activity if one of you plays the role of the principal. Make sure that role players have enough time to read the situation and the given verbal statements and non-verbal behaviors built into their roles. Role players may do more than is indicated in their scripts, but they must give the information and the interactions indicated. For ease of handling, staple a statement of the situation and the individual role within a manilla folder for each role player.

After the role play, conduct a discussion with the whole group. Ask them what they believe are the underlying reasons for or sources of the difficulties presented in the mock staffing. As the participants identify problems, list them on newsprint in one of three columns. At the end of the discussion put one of these headings on each column: "Need for Adequate

Assessment Data," "Need for Support Systems for Staff and Parents," and "Need for Continuous Input Regarding Client's Performance and Concerns of Staff, Parents; Continuous Access to Information." It works best if one of you leads the discussion and the other lists the comments on the newsprint.

During the discussion, the participants may identify many of the surface behaviors reflecting the underlying problems. Refer to these during the next section of the training which deals with communication problems. At this point, key on the comments that relate to inadequate data being presented, a lack of joint support systems for staff members and parents, and the lack of continuous input and access to information regarding the client. If you feel that some of the negative aspects of the staffing are being overlooked, you might find it helpful to pose some of the questions listed below. They should aid you in drawing from participants a solid list of underlying problems that caused difficulties at the IEP staffing itself. The questions are listed in the specific headed columns to which they relate, but do not write them out. They are merely prompters for discussion. Spend about fifteen minutes identifying problems.

Need for Adequate Assessment Data	Need for Support Systems for Staff and Parents	Need for Continuous Input Regarding Client's Performance and Concerns of Staff, Parents; Continuous access to information.
1. How recent was the speech clinician's data?	1. Describe the classroom teacher's emotional state. Did anyone respond to his/her show of feelings?	1. What did the classroom teacher know about the information from the specialists?
2. Was the speech clinician specifying or generalizing when implying a lack of home enrichment? Was the classroom teacher specifying or generalizing when stating, "Doing worse than other students"?	2. Describe the mother's emotional state. Did anyone respond to her show of feelings?	2. Had the learning disabilities teacher and the speech clinician communicated?
3. Was there any parental input?	3. What need does the mother's comment about religion indicate?	3. Had the psychologist seen the assessment results from any other specialist?
		4. Were physician's records shared?

(continued)

continued

Need for Adequate Assessment Data	Need for Support Systems for Staff and Parents	Need for Continuous Input Regarding Client's Performance and Concerns of Staff, Parents; Continuous access to information.
4. Can you spot a statement of the principal that is not in compliance with PL 94-142? (Making a placement recommendation before writing the IEP.)	4. What activities were the parents instructed to carry out at home? What help were they given?	5. Had parents had previous access to any of the assessment data?
5. Was the psychologist specifying or generalizing when suggesting a behavior modification program?	5. Had the educators made use of the expertise of a physician?	
6. On how much assessment data was the psychologist basing her/her conclusions?	6. Had there been a prior meeting of staff members?	
7. Was the nurse giving accurate medical information? Had he/she communicated with the physician?	7. Had there been prior contacts with parents?	

Activity B: Developing Solutions to Identified Problems

After the participants have finished listing problems, ask them to form groups of five or six. Tell the groups that the purpose of this activity is to have them brainstorm solutions to the problems they identified. Ask each group to appoint a recorder to prepare a master sheet for the small group to share with the large group at the end of the activity. Give each group member a copy of Handout 1 on which to keep his/her own notes.

Give the groups fifteen minutes to prepare their solutions. Then ask each group to share their responses. The sharing portion of this activity should last about twenty minutes. One of you facilitators should list the composite notes on the newsprint pad.

Below are some suggested solutions to problems. Do not list these solutions unless they are not generated by the participants themselves.

Need for Adequate Assessment Data	Need for Support Systems for Staff and Parents	Need for Continuous Input Regarding Client's Performance and Concerns of Staff, Parents; continuous access to information.
1. Check to be sure information is up to date and appropriate.	1. Parents need to know what staff wants to know.	1. Central files (consider the Buckley Amendment, but know that specific observation data can be shared ... input by staff, parents, student.)
2. Observation data (Train people to see the difference between generalizations and observations.) Might include observations outside of school - most definitely observations made by parents.	2. Parents need encouragement to share concerns and successes.	2. Continuous and frequent contact with parents. Perhaps a case manager could be assigned.
3. Ask parent to gather specific data. Give them forms to complete also.	3. Parent/staff need skills to implement IEP... Suggestions for parent: use of packages of programmed materials; teachers, other parents or support staff give demonstrations on how to work with child; specific lesson plans for parents to use, volunteer parents aid in the classroom.	3. Keep careful records of staffings and committee functions which attend to new information shared and concerns aired.
4. Student feelings about self...through interview or in written response.		4. Have each staffing evaluated.

(continued)

continued

Need for Adequate Assessment Data	Need for Support Systems for Staff and Parents	Need for Continuous Input Regarding Client's Performance and Concerns of Staff, Parents; continuous access to information.
5. Clarify difference between judgment and opinion.	4. Staff needs time for sharing information before and after the staffing to discuss what they need to do to implement the IEP.	
	5. Not necessarily in-school meetings.	
	6. Pre-staffing contacts with parents and staff with one another, and perhaps with student.	
	7. Anticipating questions --What can we give to one another?	
<---------- Pre-staffing in-service ---------->		
<---------- Assistance for mainstreaming teachers (decent class size and sufficient support) ---------->		

Participant Materials

Cut along dotted lines - attach one Situation Description to inside of each folder.

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

PRINCIPAL: State the purpose of the meeting. Then introduce everyone by surnames and titles and appoint the speech clinician as note-taker. Act as chief director ... be pompous, pushy, impersonal. Call on each professional to give his/her report, rush the meeting along, gloss over disagreement among staff members. At the end of the meeting, state, "We are in agreement that Sally Felton should be placed in the resource room for half of each school day and that the remainder of school time, she will be mainstreamed into the regular classroom. Such plan shall be subject to review at the end of the present school year. Are there any questions? If not, you parents can expect to receive a copy of today's proceedings along with an IEP statement for your signatures within a month of this date. Meeting is adjourned."

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

NURSE: Be consistently condescending to parents. Continually ask, "What does Mother think?" -- about aspects of Sally's performance and needs. Visibly blanch at swearing from father. Report that the child is on "Ritalin," share the doctor's statement that the drug should have no negative effect on school performance. Indicate that the physician is unwilling to talk about learning problems related to secondary effects of medication.

Cut along dotted lines -- attach one Situation Description to inside of each folder.

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

SOCIAL WORKER: Attempt to serve as advocate whether needed or not. Never let mother finish a question for herself. Translate responses for parents as though they can understand nothing for themselves. React to classroom teacher's remark about welfare with, "Well, for heaven's sake, that's not all we do!"

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

SPEECH CLINICIAN: Take notes. Report that Sally lacks expected oral language facility for her age and educational experience. Imply a lack of enrichment in the home as a possible contributing factor. Give Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities results that indicate lack of grammatic closure, syntax and auditory memory weaknesses, no apparent "artic" problems. State that you have the results of the Boehm Test of Basic Concepts given at the end of Sally's first grade year, and base your recommendation for the IEP in part on these results. Disagree with the doctor's statement, shared by the nurse, that Ritalin has no negative effect on school performance. Indicate that you asked the parents to carry out some correctional speech exercises with Sally at home -- results were minimal. You saw no need to give the parents any special training in how to administer the exercises. At end of staffing, after the principal makes the "agreement statement," suggest that parents sign IEP form before it is filled in.

Cut along dotted lines -- attach one Situation Description to inside of each folder.

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

LEARNING DISABILITIES TEACHER: You state that you have given the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, the Key Math Test, and the Woodcock Reading Test. You are unaware of the oral language deficit noted by the speech clinician, but you are aware of erratic perceptual problems and visual discrimination problems. "I can't identify any real patterns ... I wish I could, then I'd know what to do."

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

FATHER: Clock watch ... time is obviously inconvenient for you. In the midst of things say, "I need to get back to the office. I wish we could have met in the evening when I had enough time." Be angry, frustrated with proceedings. Ask after the psychologist's report, "Are you saying Sally is crazy?" Ask at some appropriate time, "Damn it, what are we accomplishing here?"

Cut along dotted lines - attach one Situation Description to inside of each folder.

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

PSYCHOLOGIST: Exude a "know-it-all" attitude. You have given the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - Revised Edition, (WISC-R) and are confident that this one test gives you all the necessary information for you to make a recommendation. The WISC shows 110/93 scatter between performance and verbal scores, but indicates average I.Q. The test was given this fall and is in direct contradiction to scores Sally received when tested during her first grade year. You state, "Parents may want to have child retested by a non-school psychologist at their own expense if they are concerned about discrepancy." You are confident of your recommendation despite conflicting evidence. You are a real behaviorist and recommend that Sally will perform best in a behavior modification program based on Skinnerian model. Object to mother's suggestion of possible disagreement among staff.

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

CLASSROOM TEACHER: Let it be known that you are new and uneasy as this is your first staffing. It is also your first involvement with intentional mainstreaming. Constantly defer to the principal and visibly react to the father's swearing. State, "I just know that Sally is doing worse than any other of my students, and I don't know how to help her do any better." Indicate that you have not seen any of the specific difficulties mentioned by the learning disabilities teacher and the speech clinician. Make it known that you want Sally placed in the resource room all day. Offer irrelevant information about classroom activities to show low performance. State the generalization, "Perhaps Sally is developmentally impaired." At some time make a comment which assumes that because a social worker is present, the family is on welfare.

Cut along dotted lines - attach one Situation Description to inside of each folder.

SITUATION: You are meeting today to write the annual IEP for a nine-year-old, Caucasian female, Sally Felton. She has been diagnosed as learning disabled. The tentative recommendation is a resource room placement for half-day -- mainstreaming for the remainder of school time. Primary problem areas: reading and math.

MOTHER: You are unnerved, upset, confused by terminology. Ask what is meant by "developmentally impaired." Throughout the staffing dab at your tear-filled eyes with a Kleenex. Let it be known that you are interested in your child, but not sure how to go about meeting her best interests. Indicate that a "religious" acquaintance has told you that either you must be a sinner to have a child so afflicted or you are an extra strong person in God's eyes that He could think you could bear such a burden. Voice your noticing of contradiction among staff reports. "Am I right in thinking that you people do not agree on the best way to deal with Sally's problems?"

GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL BRAINSTORMING

The following points were taken from Don Koberg's Universal Traveler, 1976.

1. Defer judgment.
2. Free-wheel (Let your mind go - don't pre-judge your own ideas).
3. Tag on (Don't wait for an idea. Make another one out of the last one by changing it in some way.)
4. Quantity is wanted; don't hold back for a minute.

Use space below to list tentative solutions suggested by your group. Add to the list as you listen to the solutions generated by other groups.

Need for Adequate Assessment Data	Need for Support Systems for Staff and Parents	Need for Continuous Input Regarding Client's Performance and Concerns of Staff, Parents; continuous access to information.

MODULE II: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

If We Had Access to All Pertinent Information About the Child, Could We Then Assure That Our Formal Staffings Would Be Successful?

MATERIALS NEEDED

Newsprint
Tape
Marking pens
1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 2, "Jargon Test"
1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 3, "Recording Sheet"
1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 4, "Role Identification"
1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 5, "Self-Inventory: Responding to Feedback"
1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 6, "Staffing Evaluation Form"

TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE MODULE II

(20 min.)	*Activity A:*	*Large Group Discussion*
(15 min.)		*Jargon List - individually*
(10 min.)		*Large Group Discussion*
(20 min.)		*Listing of Essential Terms - individually*
(10 min.)		*Large Group Discussion*
(20 min.)	*Activity B:*	*Role Identification - small groups*
(30 min.)		*Share Role Discussions - large group*
(15 min.)	*Activity C:*	*Developing Interpersonal Skills - Complete Self-Inventory*
(15 min.)		*Sharing of Positive Activities/Responses - small groups*
(15 min.)		*Discuss Feedback - large groups*
(25 min.)		*Feedback Activities - small groups and share with large group*
(25 min.)		*Staffing Evaluation and Assessment of Present Performance - large group*

Approximately 4 hours

Activity A: Jargon Test

It is within the arena of communication that educators who work with parents are most aware of difficulties. "I just don't know how to talk with that mother," "Everyone left that meeting feeling uncomfortable." These are feelings shared at one time or another by most people involved in staffings and are responses voiced by many.

Begin this part of the training process with a large group discussion in which you ask the participants to think beyond the essential lack of relevant information evident in the mock staffing, and to recall specific instances of uncomfortableness in their dealings with parents and other educators. Record a list of specific problems they mention. Most often, people who have participated in previous workshops have referred to the following as sources of difficulty:

1. Use of jargon which is not clearly understood by either parents or educators.
2. Confusion about the roles of people present at formal staffings.
3. Poor skills in listening and in giving and receiving feedback.
4. Lack of attention to non-verbal cues and to the feelings of others.
5. Tendency to speak in generalizations rather than to discuss observable behaviors.

This publication is not a comprehensive training program in interpersonal skills. If your group feels that they need intensive work in this area, we suggest that you contact your state office of education for the names of people who are skilled in conducting workshops in group skills. The following exercises are offered as initiating activities which your group can use to begin overcoming recognized obstacles to effective communication.

P.L. 94-142 states that parents shall be communicated with in a language that is understandable to them. 'Educationese' is not the native language of anyone, yet educators throw esoteric terms around as though everyone understands them. The truth is that many times, specialists in one discipline do not understand the jargon used by specialists of another area. If professionals are hesitant to admit this to one another, one

can imagine that a parent is especially reluctant to simply say, "I don't understand the language being used here." This jargon test is outside the area of special education, though its terms are probably familiar to most college graduates. It can be used to give members a chance to stand for a moment in the shoes of parents whose area of expertise is not special education. Give participants no more than fifteen minutes to complete the test. (Handout 2)

After the participants have completed the test, discuss with them the feelings they experienced as they searched for "right answers." This sharing will easily lead to discussion of the question: "Should we then work to eliminate all professional terminology in our discussions with one another and with parents?" The obvious answer to this question is "no." There is an important difference between a jargon-laden monologue and valid information-giving which makes use of necessary professional terminology for accurate communication.

Ask the participants to take about twenty minutes on their own to make a list of terms they find to be essential for accurate sharing of information within their areas of speciality. Each term they list should be followed by their most concise definition. Collect the lists at the end of the exercise for reproduction and distribution at a later date. When you distribute the lists, discuss with the group procedures for insuring that parents and professionals at the staffing are aware of the definitions of the terms being used. The terms and their accurate definitions should be provided to every educator and parent involved in the IEP process.

Immediately after collecting the lists, you could choose two or three terms from each sheet submitted in order to give a second, on-the-spot jargon test. Ask the participants to write a definition of each term you give. It is unlikely that people in the group will be able to define all the terms you give them. If they cannot, how can they expect parents to define them? If they do not understand the information shared, how can they hope to work with parents to reach the intelligent decisions for which they are jointly responsible?

Activity B: Role Identification

From discussions we have heard among educators, we have learned that one source of difficulty in communication lies in the lack of understanding of specialized professional roles. The following set of exercises is based on the assumption that your professional staff includes all the roles which were part of the mock staffing, plus a physical therapist and/or an occupational therapist. If your staff extends beyond this, or if you do not have access to all the personnel included, you will want to alter the first activity accordingly. It is impossible to provide you with an accurate description of roles as they might exist in your particular state or district. It is the responsibility of you, the facilitators, to talk with someone in your state department of education or your area education office to obtain valid descriptions of roles as they are to be carried out in your district before your group participates in this series of activities.

Ask participants to break into triads. Give each a copy of Handout 4 and tell them that their task is to work together to describe the roles of the professionals listed on the page. Each group should come up with one master list of descriptions. Although we all are ultimately concerned about how each of these professionals can contribute to successful staffings, at this point participants are to address the question, "What is it these people do in an educational context?" Give them about twenty minutes for this task.

Then ask groups to share role descriptions. You will want to verify descriptions with professionals present who serve in these roles. Where necessary use your background knowledge to clarify and to correct any misunderstandings. Some of the roles will be well-known to participants, but they are apt to have a very narrow view or stereotypic view of others. Pay particular attention to the role described for a parent, a principal, a classroom teacher, and a social worker in order to avoid stereotypes. Record appropriate descriptions on newsprint.

After general roles have been identified, address together this question: How can each of these roles contribute to assessment, individual education planning and placement? Sub-questions to consider might

be: What information can each provide?

What predictions can each make?

What questions can each raise for others to consider?

Record responses on newsprint. You may want to reproduce and share with the participants information gained from this sequence.

Activity C: Developing Interpersonal Skills

It seems to be human nature that our desire to communicate honestly and openly with one another is matched by our capacity for knowingly or unknowingly creating all kinds of obstacles to that openness. Although there are books filled with exercises designed to help people meet and respond to others, we offer few of those exercises here because we have found that it is less important for one to learn to hear him/herself described as an apple or an orange than that each person have opportunities to practice communication skills in an arena which reflects his/her authentic concerns and the reality of the world in which s/he operates. Our concern is for the development of communication skills which make working partnerships rewarding at the personal level and productive in a professional sense.

As facilitators, you will need to judge the appropriateness of activities for your group. Hopefully, throughout the training sessions you have modeled positive behaviors in terms of listening, questioning, giving and receiving feedback, and attending to the feelings of those working with you. Your previous interaction is most likely to assure the honest addressing of problems here. We have outlined a tentative sequence of activities which might be used with your group. If you feel that these activities do not adequately meet the group's needs, please expand this sequence as necessary, or, as suggested earlier, contact someone who can help you to meet the specific needs you recognize.

Consider beginning this sequence by distributing copies of Handout 5 and asking participants to complete the self-inventory. It may be a good idea to follow completion of the inventory with a rationale for its use which includes these ideas:

1. People often have not taken the time or had the opportunity to reflect upon their personal responses to feedback others give them.
2. When we are reflecting on our own, we tend to consider only written or spoken comments made to us and overlook the mass of nonverbal messages sent our way.
3. When they think about it, many people find that they respond more comfortably to neutral or negative information about themselves than they do to positive feedback. It's not so much that people don't like hearing good things about themselves; most of us do. Perhaps we hear them so rarely in the places where we work that they take us by surprise.

If participants know one another and work together, the above rationale can lead easily to a "strength bombardment" activity. Ask participants to meet together in triads and, in round-robin fashion, share three positive things that they see the others in the triad doing in their work. Person #1 addresses person #2, person #2 addresses person #3, person #3 addresses person #1. When this part of the activity is completed, ask each person to list the three strengths named for each member of the group. Have them ask each speaker to check their lists for accuracy. Ask the participants to return to the large group to discuss implications of the activity in terms of giving and receiving feedback and in terms of listening skills. Refer back to the previous sessions on support systems and ask participants to consider the possible relationship between the structures for those systems and the giving and receiving of positive feedback.

If participants do not know one another well enough to honestly share positive feedback, try this alternative. Ask the group to form triads and ask each person in the triad to state three strengths they see in their own professional performance. Follow this activity with the same listening check. Large group discussion can then focus on the importance of publicly owning one's strengths and the creating of means for doing so. Again, relate to support systems -- one group with which we worked came up with the notion of posted "brag sheets" which could be used to let staff members identify in-house resources for help with particular problems.

Then ask members to break into groups of four or five and give them the following instructions:

1. Share one instance you can recall in which you failed to respond to the feelings of either a parent or another staff member. What were the results of that non-attending?
2. Brainstorm with others in your group to come up with positive alternatives to the ignoring behavior. Remember that, just as feelings are shown non-verbally as well as in words, responses to feelings can also be shown in silence. Listen closely to what is being said, and make sure that the instance being shared is related in specifics, not in generalities. This may necessitate using positive feedback skills.

After every group has completed this session, ask the participants to return to the large group and discuss some of the problems and possible solutions that were shared. Instances will likely deal with non-responses to anger, to fear, to pain, or to sulleness.

Distribute copies of Handout 6. Tell the group that it is one means for checking the quality of interpersonal skills evidenced at a staffing. If adopted, this form should be completed by every person present, including the parent(s). Results should be a high-priority item for the post-staffing meeting.

End this sequence of activities with a large group assessment of day-to-day contacts with parents and staff in the areas of listening, questioning, giving and receiving feedback and attending to the feelings of others. Where performance is deemed to be high, you can take time to praise yourselves; where it is found to be less than satisfactory, you can plan together for improvement. List the five areas on newsprint and record assessment data as you hear it.

Participant Materials

Out of Area Jargon Test

Define each of the following terms as completely as you can.

organic plot _____

sustained image _____

stream of consciousness _____

omniscient point of view _____

alter ego _____

interior monologue _____

exposition _____

egos, logos, pathos _____

denouement _____

Recording Sheet

Please list the terms which you find to be essential for accurate sharing of information within your area of speciality. Define each term.

Role Identification

Work together in groups of three to describe the roles of these professionals as they might relate to the field of education. You will have 20 minutes to complete this task.

speech clinician _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

classroom teacher _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

psychologist/psychometrist _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

school nurse _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

social worker _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

occupational therapist _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

parent _____

learning disabilities teacher _____

physical therapist _____

principal _____

Self-Inventory: Responding to Feedback

Mark the answer(s) which most nearly describe(s) your usual response to the following situations. If no given response fits, write your own in the space provided.

1. When someone pays me a compliment, I usually:
   a. Smile and say thank you.
   b. Try to say something that devalues the comment. ("Oh, it was nothing." Anyone could have done it." "I was just doing my job.")
   c. Try to ignore the comment.
   d. Make a joke out of the whole thing.
   e. Try to think of a compliment to return.
   f. _____

      _____

2. If a parent or other educator asks questions about decisions I have made or conclusions I have drawn, I usually:
   a. Feel like that person doubts my judgment.
   b. Begin questioning the quality of those decisions/conclusions myself.
   c. Answer the questions as clearly as I can.
   d. Try to redirect our conversation to a less confrontive subject.
   e. Return the questions with some of my own.
   f. _____

      _____

3. If I am in the presence of a parent or another staff member who is crying or showing other signs of distress, I usually:
   a. Ignore the behavior so as not to further embarrass the person.
   b. Try to say something that will distract him/her from whatever it is that is so upsetting.
   c. Say anything I can think of that might make the person feel better, even if I don't believe it myself.
   d. Acknowledge feelings and respond to those rather than to possible causes.
   e. Feel extremely embarrassed for that person.
   f. _____

      _____

(continued)

4. If I have shared information in a professional group setting and someone says s/he didn't understand what I said, I usually:
   a. Feel like I've been put on the spot.
   b. Rephrase what I said and ask if the rephrasing has made my meaning any clearer.
   c. Invite others to discount what I've said. ("Oh, well...It probably didn't amount to much anyway.")
   d. Figure that person wasn't listening in the first place.
   e. Ask for identification of points of confusion.
   f. _____

5. When someone is angry with me, I usually:
   a. Withdraw or at least back off from the anger.
   b. Get angry in return.
   c. Ask the person to explain what it is that angers him/her.
   d. Apologize even if I don't understand why s/he should be angry.
   e. Make light of the situation in the hope that the person will forget about his/her anger.
   f. _____

6. If I receive a praising letter from a parent or from others with whom I work, I usually:
   a. Keep it to myself.
   b. Drop hints to my associates about the letter, but share neither its contents nor my feelings about it.
   c. Share contents with special friends and tell them how pleased I am to have received it.
   d. Wonder what's coming next. People don't often give something for nothing.
   e. Say nothing, but make sure a copy is placed in my personnel folder.
   f. _____

7. If I find out that I have inadvertently given misinformation to a parent or a fellow educator which was accepted as accurate, I usually:
   a. Feel terribly ashamed of my error.
   b. Hope that no one finds out about the mistake.
   c. Correct the misinformation, but acknowledge no responsibility for the error.
   d. Decide that I'll correct the misinformation if someone asks me about it.
   e. Contact those who were given the misinformation to provide correction and to offer help in taking care of any problems the change in information might cause.
   f. _____

Staffing Evaluation Form
(Adapted)

Client's Name _____ Evaluator's Name _____ (optional)

Meeting Date _____

In completing this form, you are asked to rank performance of our group in seven areas. There is space after each category for you to record specific occurrences which led you to rank our performance as you did. What you write may be positive or negative or a mixture of the two. Without your honest feedback, we cannot work together to improve our skills, so please share openly.

RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION was lacking. We served our own needs. We watched from outside the group. We were "grinding our own axes" or refusing to share.	*1-3 4-6 7-9*	RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION was present. We were sensitive to the needs of our group. Members participated in efficiently sharing all the information that needed to be shared.
GOAL was vague. The purpose of the group was more or less assumed by group members. I couldn't tell whether we did what we were supposed to because I wasn't sure what our purpose was.	*1-3 4-6 7-9*	GOAL was clearly understood by all members of the group. We could continuously check our progress because we knew where we were headed.
COMMUNICATION OF IDEAS was poor. We did not listen. We did not check out our interpretations of what we may have heard. Ideas were ignored.	*1-3 4-6 7-9*	COMMUNICATION OF IDEAS was good. We listened and made sure we understood one another's input. Interpretations and predictions were openly presented and examined.
COMMUNICATION OF FEELINGS was poor. We did not attend to feelings shown by others. We did not attempt to express our own feelings honestly.	*1-3 4-6 7-9*	COMMUNICATION OF FEELINGS was good. We listened and understood and recognized feelings. We responded to others' feelings honestly and openly shared our own.

LEADERSHIP meant control here. The group was dominated by one or more persons. We needed a facilitator rather than a controller.	*1-3 4-6 7-9*	LEADERSHIP responsibilities were shared among members. Our facilitator encouraged assertive participation from each of us. S/he helped us to remain on task.
AUTHENTICITY was missing. We were wearing masks. We worked harder at "playing roles" than at being real people.	*1-3 4-6 7-9*	AUTHENTICITY was present. We met and shared as real people. There was nothing phony about our interaction.
SILENCES were dead. They were unproductive periods -- tension-filled, or just empty.	*1-3 4-6 7-9*	SILENCES were productive. People were thinking about what had been said before responding, or they were giving others time to formulate a response.

Any form has its limitations. If you can offer additional feedback that will help us to work together more effectively, please write your comments below.

Adapted from several forms included in Dr. Raymond Hock's Human Relations Training, edited by Karen Ford and prepared as a cooperative project between Drake University and the Iowa Department of Public Instruction through support of the U. S. Office of Education.

MODULE III: APPROPRIATE TIMING/SETTING

Will Thorough Knowledge of the Student and the Development of Good Communication Skills Solve All Problems That Arise in Staffings?

MATERIALS NEEDED

Newsprint
Tape
Marking pens
1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 7, "A Compilation of Possible Solutions for Problems of Timing and Setting"
1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 8, "Examining Interaction Patterns"

TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE MODULE III

	Activity A:	*Identifying Timing and Setting Problems*
(30 min.)		*General List of Problems - small groups*
(15 min.)		*Share Responses - large group*
	Activity B:	*Identifying Solutions to Timing and Setting Problems*
(45 min.)		*Discuss Solutions Provided - small groups*
(25 min.)	*Activity C:*	*Examining Interaction Patterns*
---		*Complete Examining Interaction Patterns Form and Share Responses - large group*

Approximately 1 3/4 hours

Activity A: Identifying Timing and Setting Problems

Questions concerning the timing and the setting of the staffing seem relatively minor in comparison to having a thorough knowledge of the student and being able to effectively communicate that information. The training sequence was arranged to deal with these considerations at this point because if educators really know the student and can communicate meaningfully with one another and with parents, most participants in a staffing would be amenable to altering schedules and finding an appropriate place to meet.

One aspect of IEP planning that we have knowingly glossed over is the question of when it is appropriate to have the student involved as a participant at a staffing. The value of having the student initially give some of his/her own assessment data as well as having the opportunity to add to the continuous information file has been mentioned previously. There are times when it is not only appropriate but highly beneficial to have the student present at a staffing to join in the decision-making process. If the student is present at a staffing, it would be appropriate to talk with the student prior to the staffing to share with him/her the proposed agenda and ask the student to also give some input. The communication patterns during the staffing would be altered so that the student would not be spoken of in the third person but would be a part of the interaction.

As a beginning activity, ask participants to form small groups of five. Have them share recent experiences in order to compile a list of specific problems they have encountered with the timing and the setting of staffings within their district. Past groups have mentioned some of the following problems:

1. A hurried initial parental contact setting a negative tone that seems to pervade the staffing.
2. One or both of the parents being unable to come because of home or work responsibilities.
3. Parents being uneasy in the school building setting.
4. Educators not having release time to communicate prior to the staffing.
5. The staffing itself being too rushed and too formal.
6. Too many or too few people being present at the staffing.
7. Time spent with parents being limited to staffings.

After the lists have been compiled, have the members of each group share their list with the large group, illustrating the problems with specific anecdotes if they wish. After the first group shares their list, the members of the other groups can add problems not already mentioned or they might reinforce ones previously listed. Record a composite list on newsprint.

Activity B: Identifying Solutions to Timing and Setting Problems

After each group has shared their list of problems, give every participant a copy of Handout 7 . Ask them to remain in the same group they were in during the first activity and to discuss the solutions listed on the handout, focusing on which ones they think will work best within their district. During the discussion, have them address the following questions: Do the offered suggestions solve the problems of timing/setting we have raised? Are there other alternatives we can creatively plan?

If at any point in the training there are likely to be hesitancies and doubts expressed, this is it. The suggested solutions call for an even greater investment of time than special educators now give, as well as a redefining of role expectations of professionals and parents at a staffing, and a great deal of tradition breaking in terms of creating an appropriate environment for a school-sponsored meeting. However, notice our emphasis on the adjective special; this word is not only part of a title, but it is also a description of the type of people who make education a profession. The solutions proposed for timing and setting problems ask for more time, commitment, and investment of self. We believe that educators who work within a supportive environment will give all three. It is especially reassuring to educators if members of the administration are present and voice their agreement to innovative changes in the timing and setting of staffings.

Activity C: Examining Interation Patterns

As a closing to the two-part sequence of identifying problems with timing/setting and considering and generating solutions to those problems, ask each participant to independently fill out the Examining Interaction Patterns form, Handout 8. After completion of the forms, give each group a few minutes to share their answers. Remind participants that they must continually attend to effective communication skills among themselves if they hope to practice them with those they are training and/or with parents in staffings and other contacts.

Participant Materials

A Compilation of Possible Solutions For Problems of Timing and Setting

Prior to Staffing

How should we make initial contact with parents?

- It is better to make contacts in person than by telephone.
- The educator making the contact should be aware of previous experiences the parents have had with the school to determine if there are any pre-set attitudes.

Who should make the contacts?

- The answer will vary, but consider the differing implications of it being the classroom teacher, the principal, or the psychologist.
- Perhaps a case manager could make all contacts with one set of parents.

What should be communicated?

- The parents should be informed of their rights and responsibilities.
- Ask the parents if they want an advocate -- a professional, a friend, a minister.
- Ask the parents to gather assessment information; let them know of their roles as continuous informers and decision makers.
- Ask the parents if they want their son or daughter present at the staffing.
- Be willing to accommodate the parents' schedule and desire for the place of the staffing. (An Assistant Director of Special Education related at one of our workshops that he conducted a staffing while a farmer was butchering a hog in the barn.) It is not unthinkable to meet at the corner bar, in the parents' home or in a casual lounge setting within a local building or the school itself. (If the meeting is held at school, consider a father's comment, "Don't expect me to sit in a kindergarten chair and retain any dignity at all.") Be careful of stereotyping; sometimes it is assumed that a factory worker would prefer the setting of the bar and the lawyer the school conference room. The opposite may be true.

Could the parents meet with each professional immediately following assessment?

- This plan acknowledges and values diversity. Professionals will differ in their assessments and recommendations. Parents will know this and can truly become advocates for their child. Not all parents would be comfortable with the sharing of differing opinions, but for many the "act not together" approach is most productive.

Could the staff meet with each other immediately following assessment?

- They, too, could meet prior to the staffing to share assessment data -- not to make decisions. They should determine if they want the student present at the staffing.

During Staffing

How many people should be present?

- Ask the parents if they would be more comfortable having a few people present (P.L. 94-142 makes clear who must be there) who can interpret the assessment results or would they prefer to meet with each professional concerned with the student. (Consider the comment of a parent, "The important thing to me is whether or not I feel a decision has already been made and a false unified front is being presented, not how many educators are present. If the IEP is typed, copied, and stapled, I know I'm not there to be involved in planning for my child.")

Who conducts the staffing?

- In some states it has become practice (or state regulation) for the building administrator to conduct the staffing. However, there is a great deal of difference between chairing and facilitating a meeting. Whoever conducts the meeting should see that the purpose of the staffing is clearly stated, make process more important than procedure by giving enough time for sharing of information, questions, and creating an air of friendliness.
- Having different hosts/hostesses can alter the "chain of command" deferring that often happens at a staffing. Have you ever considered having a student host/hostess a staffing? (This might be especially workable for a secondary student.)

What kind of talk is appropriate?

- The communications section of the training deals with this question in depth, but talk which promotes an equal relationship between parents and educators is favored. Of course, all are not equal in expertise, but most certainly all are equal in concern-showing and decision-making.
- Don't forget to make a mother and father feel co-equal. Many times the impression is given that educators would rather communicate with a mother -- "She's closer to the child." Sometimes educators fear that making small talk with a parent is phony or time wasting -- so don't make "small talk." Talk about things that matter to you ... your job, your family, your successes ... talk as you would to any adult in a situation of just getting to know him/her.

Follow-Up to Staffing

Who should evaluate the staffing?

- Both educators and parents.
- Use written and/or verbal responses.

Who should be available for questions?

- Again a case manager may continue contact, but let the parents know there is an open line to school. (Consider the experience of one parent, "The classroom teacher calls me every two weeks to share thoughts with me about my child.")

Can the parent give follow-up information?

- Implement procedures for the parents' input and access to the student's continuous file. Plan and carry out home/school activities.

When should the IEP be reviewed?

- P. L. 94-142 calls for annual review.
- Once-a-year formal review (without change in placement) would probably be adequate if all of the suggested follow-up activities are carried out.

Examining Interaction Patterns

Who attended to task roles (functions required in clarifying and carrying out group task)?

- took the initiative, proposed ideas, got you started? _____
- attempted to gather/give information needed to accomplish task? _____
- elaborated on ideas/suggestions of other group members in order to clarify or expand initial inputs? _____
- summarized, restated suggestions after group had discussed them, pulled together related ideas or suggestions? _____

Who attended to group building - maintenance roles (functions required to improve the human quality of the group)?

- encouraged others to share their ideas, praised others and their suggestions, accepted contributions? _____
- tried to make sure that everyone who wanted to contribute was given time to do so? _____

Who attended to task processing roles?

- encouraged group to weigh relative value of conclusions, solutions? _____
- determined sources of difficulty in accomplishing group task and suggested possible means for moving beyond them? _____
- helped us to relax by making us laugh when we needed to? _____

Additional Comments Regarding Interaction Patterns:

MODULE IV: AWARENESS INTO ACTION

How Can Insights Gained and Skills Learned Be Combined to Build a Comprehensive Plan for Action?

MATERIALS NEEDED

1 Copy (per participant) of Handout 9, "Final Activity"

TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE MODULE IV

	Activity A:	*Developing an Implementation Plan*
(10 min.)		*Large Group Discussion*
(3 hours)		*Write Plans - small groups*
	Activity B:	*Evaluate Plans*
(30 min.)		*Review and Critique Plans*
(15 min.)		*Return Plans to Original Group to Read Critiques*

Approximately 3 3/4 hours

Activity A: Developing an Implementation Plan

Throughout this training sequence, participants have carefully examined areas of difficulty and generated their own solutions to specific problems. If the solutions suggested are to be used in a meaningful way, efforts toward creating a partnership between parents and educators must take place within a sound organizational framework or plan. During these final activities, participants will develop a plan for turning awareness into action.

Distribute Handout 9 to each participant before beginning the final discussion. Then ask them to discuss the question: What does the term, IEP, mean to you at this point? Individualized educational planning is an ongoing process which begins with the identification of need for special services and continues through termination of those services. Any framework should include means for facilitating this from start to finish. Since the problems which can occur during termination of services have not been previously mentioned, ask the group to share some problems so they can plan for meeting them. There is no need to record a master list of these problems, but be sure the following are included:

- The client's hesitance to give up the support systems within which s/he has experienced success.
- The parents' concern that their child will be unable to succeed without the special help s/he has been receiving.
- The tendency of parents to assume that their close partnership with the school terminated with the special services.
- Unwillingness on the part of educators to risk the failure of the client as s/he progresses through increasingly unrestricted environments.
- The tendency of educators to overlook the value of continuous assessment and communication beyond the limits of our present notion of special education. All students are special; their education deserves careful planning.

Then ask the participants to discuss: What are the key elements of any framework or plan you might design? They may wish to quickly review all areas of the training sequence in order to answer this question. Master lists of problems identified and solutions generated should be available to those who want them. Participants have not shared solutions generated to address unique problems encountered in the area of timing/setting. Those solutions should be a part of their storehouse of knowledge for completing the final activity.

While it is important that you not outline a framework or plan for the participants, you may wish to focus attention on the key elements of in-service and personal/professional support systems. Remind them that their task now is to use all their knowledge and skills to generate the best plan that they can invent for assuring positive outcomes of IEP staffings. This is not the time to let problems of logistics stifle possibilities. What is educationally desirable is administratively feasible. Success depends mostly on the choosing of priorities. Our shared priority is the best possible educational experience for exceptional children. This priority is not attainable without a positive working partnership between parents and educators.

Ask the participants to form groups of five or six to develop a plan. Ask the groups to each select one person to record the plan as it is generated.

Activity B: Evaluate Plans

When the groups have finished their plans, ask each group to exchange plans with one other group for review. Tell them to carefully examine the other group's plan, jot down possible oversights and add any suggestions that might be of help in finalizing the plan. When they have finished making comments, ask that the groups return plans to their original authors.

Members of each group should then review the comments their plan received and make any revisions they choose to make. Collect each group's plan and compile them into a master framework or plan which includes ideas from every group. While you undoubtedly need to expand beyond them, the categories used to group solutions to problems of timing/setting could serve as a starting place for ordering the information in the plans. Make sure that every participant receives a copy of the master plan.

When you are compiling this final outline, be sure to include as many ideas as possible -- eliminate only repetitions. It is hard to remember sometimes that ownership rests with the participants.

Participant Materials

Final Activity

Work together in groups of five or six to make a plan for assuring the best possible outcomes for staffings with parents of exceptional children. What is the BEST framework you can design to assure positive results?

When you are asked to do so, exchange plans with one other group. Carefully examine the plan made by the other group, note possible changes, add suggestions -- write any comments which could be helpful in strengthening the plan. You will have about twenty minutes to complete this task. When your plan is returned to you, read all comments and make any changes you wish in your first draft.

Remember: A plan which cannot be implemented will be of little value. The framework you have created together may need to be reshaped to fit individual district needs.

"What is educationally desirable is administratively feasible."

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS NEEDED

1 Copy (per participant) of a workshop evaluation form

TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE CLOSING ACTIVITIES

(20 min.) *Activity A: Closing Comments - large group*

(5 min.) *Activity B: Evaluation of Workshop - individually*

Approximately 1/2 hour

Activity A: Closing Comments

As you end this final session, you'll have special feedback to offer. You will be the ones who have come to recognize the unique qualities of the group; let participants know you've noticed. In addition, you may want to do the following:

- Let participants know that the plan they have created together will need to be adapted to meet their district's or school's specific needs. A key characteristic of any sound plan is its flexibility.

- Ask them to think for a minute about this question: What would have been the results of beginning the training sequence by distributing a plan such as the one they have created? The question is asked to renew awareness of the value of ownership. Ready-made solutions often carry far less weight than ones we create for ourselves. Answers for which there are yet no real questions are quickly forgotton.

- Share your understanding that a plan which makes possible the very best that we can offer does not deny the reality of problems in implementation. Yes, there are parents who may refuse to participate; there may be an administrator somewhere who might wish to thwart our efforts. But to recognize the possibility of failure in some particular instance is far different from assuming that success is impossible. By planning for the best, we keep ourselves from so easily mistaking a parent's initial fear for refusal to participate and from confusing an administrator's initial reservations with flat rejection.

- And, finally, ask them to consider this: What good is a plan if no one can implement it? Your training sessions have served as a model for careful attention to requisite skills, but it is important that as participants leave to either implement the plan they've created together or to work individually with others to create their own plans, they realize that skill-building takes a great deal of time and energy.

If you can arrange it, a final meal together in someone's home or in another pleasant setting can be a special way to celebrate the accomplishments achieved and the working relationships formed during these sessions. If we could be there, we'd offer a toast to you and those with whom you've worked. It's true -- special educators <u>are</u> special people!

Activity B: Evaluation of Workshop

Hand out copies of an evaluation form. Ask participants to help improve future workshops by providing their honest reactions.

Handout 6, the Staffing Evaluation Form, could be modified and used as the workshop evaluation form. Hopefully, during the workshop, you and the participants have developed a working relationship like what occurs during an IEP staffing.

RESOURCES

References

Koberg, Don and Jim Bagnall. Universal Traveler: A Soft-Systems Guide to Creativity, Problem-Solving and the Process of Reaching Goals. Los Altos, California: Wm. Kaufmann Inc., 1976.

Levy, Harold B., M.D. Square Pegs, Round Holes: The Learning Disabled Child in the Classroom and at Home. Boston, Massachusetts: Little, Brown & Co., 1973. $2.95 paperback.

Losen, Stuart M. and Bert Diament. Parent Conferences in the Schools: Procedures for Developing Effective Partnership. Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1978. 287 pages.

Additional Resources

Building Effective Home-School Relationships

Ira J. Gordon & William F. Breivogel
Allyn & Bacon, Inc.
470 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, MA 02210
1976; 239 pages

Communicating With Parents of Exceptional Children
Improving Parent-Teacher Relationships

Roger L. Kroth
University of New Mexico
Love Publishing Company
6635 E. Villanova Drive
Denver, CO 80222
1975; 187 pages

Parent Counseling - A "STRETCH" Teacher Education Module

Metropolitan Cooperative Educational Service Agency
Dr. Ernest L. Bentley, Jr., Executive Director
2268 Adams Drive, N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30318
1977; 57 pages

Parental Involvement

South Dakota Preschool Programs for the Handicapped
Section for Special Education
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
New State Office Building
Pierre, SD 57501
Kareen Tidball-Strickler

Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Parent-Teacher Conferences
Simformation 6

Russell J. Cooper, Mick Maier & M. Lynn Karges
Wisconsin Research and Development Center
Center for Cognitive Learning
University of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53706
1977; 62 pages

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

Time Frame for Workshop

INITIATING ACTIVITIES

(15 min.)	Activity A:	Introductions and sharing of negative experiences in working with parents
(15 min.)	Activity B:	Name Game
1/2 hour	(approximately)	

MODULE I: THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE STUDENT

(15 min.)	Activity A:	Mock Staffing
(15 min.)		Large Group Discussion - Identify Problems
(30 min.)	Activity B:	Developing Solutions for Identified Problems - small groups
(20 min.)		Share Responses - large group
1½ hours	(approximately)	

MODULE II: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

(20 min.)	Activity A:	Large Group Discussion
(15 min.)		Jargon List - individually
(10 min.)		Large Group Discussion
(20 min.)		Listing of Essential Terms - individually
(10 min.)		Large Group Discussion
(20 min.)	Activity B:	Role Identification - small groups
(30 min.)		Share Role Discussions - large group
(15 min.)	Activity C:	Developing Interpersonal Skills - Complete Self-Inventory
(15 min.)		Sharing of Positive Activities/Responses - small groups
(15 min.)		Discuss Feedback - large group
(25 min.)		Feedback Activities - small groups and share with large group
(25 min.)		Staffing Evaluation and Assessment of Present Performance - large group
4 hours	(approximately)	

MODULE III: APPROPRIATE TIMING/SETTING

	Activity A:	Identifying Timing and Setting Problems
(30 min.)		General List of Problems - small groups
(15 min.)		Share Responses - large group
(45 min.)	Activity B:	Identifying Solutions to Timing and Setting Problems
		Discuss Solutions Provided - small groups
(25 min.)	Activity C:	Examining Interaction Patterns
		Complete Examining Interaction Patterns Form and Share Responses - large group

1 3/4 hours (approximately)

MODULE IV: AWARENESS INTO ACTION

	Activity A:	Developing an Implementation Plan
(10 min.)		Large Group Discussion
(3 hours)		Write Plans - small groups
	Activity B:	Evaluate Plans
(30 min.)		Review and Critique Plans
(15 min.)		Return Plans to Original Group to Read Critiques

3 3/4 hours (approximately)

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

(20 min.)	Activity A:	Closing Comments - large group
(5 min.)	Activity B:	Evaluation of Workshop - individually

1/2 hour (approximately)

APPENDIX II

Sections of P.L. 94-142
That Relate to
Parents' and Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Section	Title	Page Number in Federal Register
121a.300	Free Appropriate Public Education General Education	42488
121a.340	Individualized Educational Programs	42490
121a.500	Procedural Safeguards	42494
121a.530	Protection in Evaluation Procedures	42496
121a.550	Least Restrictive Environment	42497
121a.560	Confidentiality of Information	42498

APPENDIX III

Due Process Rights of Parents

The following is a list of basic due process rights that parents are entitled to according to Public Law 94-142:

- Notice in writing, before any action is taken or recommended that may change (or fail to change) their child's school program.
- All records related to the identification, evaluation or placement of their child.
- An opportunity to speak up about serious complaints they have about any matters related to the educational services their child is receiving.
- An impartial due process hearing, when they and the school cannot agree on what type of program will be most helpful for their child. The law specifies rights available to all parents at such hearings, to ensure fairness and impartiality.
- Adequate appeals procedures. If parents are not satisfied with the results of a due process hearing, they have the right to appeal to the state department of special education; if problems remain unresolved after all these procedures have been followed, parents have the right under law to appeal to the courts.

Adapted from: "Report From Closer Look," National Information Center For The Handicapped. Summer-Fall, 1976. p.3.

APPENDIX IV

Self-Administered Due Process Guide
(Adapted)

Routine Procedures	Date Initiated	Date Completed	By Whom
1. Are evaluation (including testing)* and placement staff aware that prior to conducting an individual evaluation, written parental permission must be obtained?			
2. In the request for parental permission to individually evaluate a child, does the staff explain to the parents...			
- the evaluation (including testing) procedures to be used?			
- why an evaluation is needed?			
- what the evaluation hopes to accomplish?			
- limitations of the evaluations?			
- how the obtained data will be used?			
3. Procedures have been established to ensure that all evaluations will be as racially or culturally non-discrimatory as possible including...			
- selection of instruments?			
- administration of instruments?			
- selection of administering personnel?			
- interpretation of obtained data?			
4. Have provisions been made to notify parents that they have the right to examine all relevant records regarding the identification, evaluation and educational placement of the child?			
5. Have procedures been adopted to name one school person to serve as the major contact person between the schools and parents?			

* Throughout this guide, the term evaluation includes individual testing.

Routine Procedures	Date Initiated	Date Completed	By Whom
6. Have procedures been instituted to communicate all correspondence and procedures in the parent's native language including the use of readers and interpreters if needed?			
7. Are parents informed as soon as a child is identified as possibly needing special education services?			
8. Are the parents advised orally and in writing that the schools have a responsibility to provide an appropriate education for their child?			
9. Are parents invited to be participants in all educational planning meetings for their child?			
10. Are parents given the opportunity to bring a friend or professional with them to all education planning meetings?			
11. Are attempts made to schedule all educational planning meetings at a time convenient for both parents and school personnel?			
12. After a child has been evaluated and a special placement has been recommended, does the chairperson of the evaluation and/or placement teams have responsibility to tell the parents, both orally and in writing...			
- the results of the evaluation and the recommendation made?			
- the specific objectives to be achieved in the recommended placement?			
- an explanation of why the recommended placement is the least restrictive learning setting for the child?			
- the implications of the proposed placement, including the expected general educational achievements of the child and possible career goals?			

Routine Procedures	Date Initiated	Date Completed	By Whom
- the alternative placements available to the child?			
- that the placement decision will be reviewed periodically, at least annually?			
13. Does the placement team or chairperson attempt to communicate to parents in understandable language?			
14. Are the parents provided with a written copy of the placement recommendations and the specific education program proposed?			
15. Are parents informed orally and in writing of their right to obtain an independent evaluation of their child at public expense if necessary and present those findings to the public schools?			
16. If so, are parents advised... - to contact a local/state parent's group?			
- of the location of local/regional/ state facilities that can conduct evaluations?			
17. If the parents indicate that they do not agree with the proposed placement, is a genuine effort made by the school to explain, orally, its position and to show the parents why the proposed placement is the best one for the child?			
18. Are parents informed orally and in writing of their right to a formal hearing if they contest the school's recommendations?			
19. Are the steps to be taken to exercise that right fully explained to parents?			

Prior to the Hearing

Routine Procedures	Date Initiated	Date Completed	By Whom
1. Are parents informed in writing of the role of the hearing officer(s) including...			
- the responsibility to hear both sides?			
- a limit on evidence to that presented at the hearing?			
- the responsibility of making a decision in keeping with the child's best interests?			
- the responsibility to engage in fact finding?			
2. Are parents informed in writing that they have the following rights...			
- to bring counsel, friend, or expert witness?			
- to examine all school records upon which the school made its placement decisions?			
- to request that certain school personnel be present at the hearing and of their right to examine the school's witnesses?			
- to choose if they want an open or closed meeting?			
- to present findings from an independently conducted evaluation?			
3. Are parents informed in writing that a record of the hearing would be made available to them upon request?			
4. Are parents informed about when they will be notified of the hearing decision and about the subsequent recourse available to them?			
5. Are parents advised orally and in writing that they have the right to appeal the decision of the hearing officer(s) and of the procedures that are to be used?			

This guide was adapted from one developed by the Special Education Administrative Policy (SEAP) Manuals project of the State-Federal Information Clearinghouse for Exceptional Children.

Taken from: Function of the Placement Committee in Special Education. A Resource Manual published by National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 1201 16th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036. 1976. (202) 833-4193.

APPENDIX V

Critical Information for Child Staffings
(adapted)

I. Purpose of staffings is to develop most appropriate educational program.

II. Types of information.

A. Instructionally Relevant.

1. Relates directly to instructional programming.

2. Necessary for determining goals and objectives.

3. Basically answers the question, "What can (does) child do in various content areas (reading, arithmetic, spelling, etc.)?"

4. Should imply <u>what</u> the child needs to learn to do next in each content area.

5. Examples; knows initial consonants, can sight read basic Dolch word list, can add sums less than 20 at rate of 50 correct digits a minute, knows basic division facts dividends to 81.

B. Educationally Relevant.

1. Relates to instructional programming as to special conditions and motivational factors.

2. Basically answers the question, "How does the individual learn best?"

3. Should imply how to arrange learning opportunities.

4. Examples; is legally blind but can read extra large print, is a visual learner and has very poor auditory memory, has vivid interest in baseball, takes seizure medication at noon and becomes sleepy.

III. Format of Information.

A. Hard data should be presented (or at least available) whenever possible.

1. Test protocols, examples of written work, etc., that illustrate conclusions help convince others or the conslusion.

B. Whenever possible, present the data and the conclusion. This allows for others to formulate alternative conclusions.

C. Whatever data are presented, check to be sure data is from multiple data points (more than one observation/test). Always question shot data.

D. When conflicting data are presented, multiple data points should be valued over single data points.

E. Critical question is, "What data are believable?"

IV. Responsibilities.

A. Ethically YOU must insist on the use of the most relevant data possible.

B. You bring relevant data.

C. Do not accept irrelevant data.

D. Assertively stand by your principles.

This outline was adapted from one developed by Eugene Edgar, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

APPENDIX VI

Parental Survey Form: We Want to Know Your Child

In order that we may know more about your child, would you please fill out this information sheet and bring it with you to the next staffing you attend? No one knows your child as well as you do, and the observations you make about him/her can give us knowledge so that together we might plan a more valuable educational process for your boy or girl. Instead of giving yes/no answers or a mere listing, in response to each question would you please share a specific experience that illustrates your response?

How does your child feel about school?

What does s/he like best? _____

_____

_____

_____

What does s/he dislike? _____

_____

_____

_____

How does your child spend his/her spare time?

What activities are shared with friends? _____

_____

_____

_____

What hobbies does your child enjoy? _____

_____

_____

_____

What responsibilities is s/he given at home? _____

_____

_____

_____

What particular problems does your child have?

What health problems seem to interfere with activities? _____

_____

_____

_____

Are there any problems coping with emotions? _____

_____

_____

_____

What interests and talents does your child have?

What does s/he like to read or have read aloud? _____

_____

_____

_____

What television shows does s/he most enjoy? _____

_____

_____

_____

Does s/he play a musical instrument, sing, draw, participate in plays, etc.? _____

_____

_____

_____

What attitudes does your child display?

How does s/he respond to brothers and/or sisters? _____

_____

_____

_____

How does s/he react to parental suggestions? _____

_____

_____

_____

Does s/he willingly accept responsibilities? _____

_____

_____

_____

What recent changes, if any, have you noted?

Do you see changes in the way s/he works? _____

_____

_____

_____

Do you see any changes in the way s/he plays? _____

_____

_____

_____

Do you see changes in his/her relationships with other people? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What special help do you think your child needs?

What services would you like your child to receive at school? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What special help would you like to receive to aid your child at home?

_____

_____

_____

_____

We are aware that honest answers to the above questions often take the form of an "it depends" response. Please use the space below to make any overall comment that you think might help us to put your above comments in a clearer perspective, or any additional comments you wish to make concerning ways you think we can work together to give your child the best possible education.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX VII

A Parent's Guide to Information-Gathering

Just as we count on you to provide important information for us, it is your right to expect that we who work with your child in an educational setting provide you with information that you need to have. The following set of questions is designed to serve as a beginning point for your information gathering process. It is in no way intended to limit you or to channel your thinking, but it does let you know the kinds of information we should have available to share with you.

Responses to these questions should provide information related to the educational development of your child in these five areas:

1. Level of achievement.
2. Rate of academic development.
3. Relative strengths and weaknesses in processing information seen, heard, and read.
4. Relative strengths and weaknesses in oral, written, and motor expression.
5. Expected rate of educational growth.

Below Average	Average	Above Average

1. Where is My Child Functioning Academically Today?

   A. How does my child compare to other children his age?

      1. Skill development:
         a. Language
         b. Reading
         c. Arithmetic
         d. Writing
         e. Spelling

      2. Content Development:
         a. General Comprehension
         b. Social Studies
         c. Science

Below Average	Average	Above Average

3. Maturity Development:
   a. Ability to work independently
   b. Ability to work in a group
   c. Ability to work with peers and adults
   d. Ability to accept responsibility at his/her level

B. How does my child's school achievement compare with his ability level?

1. Skill Development:
   a. Language
   b. Reading
   c. Arithmetic
   d. Writing
   e. Spelling

2. Content Development:
   a. General Comprehension
   b. Social Studies
   c. Science

3. Maturity Development:
   a. Ability to work independently
   b. Ability to work in a group
   c. Ability to work with peers and adults
   d. Ability to accept responsibility at his/her level

Achievement Level	Actual Grade Placement

2. How Do We Know?

A. At what level in the school curriculum is my child presently functioning?

1. Standardized Test Information:
   a. Language
   b. Reading
   c. Arithmetic
   d. Writing
   e. Spelling
   f. General Comprehension
   g. Social Studies
   h. Science

Below Average	Average	Above Average

B. At what level in maturity development is my child presently functioning?

1. Maturity Development:
   a. Ability to work independently
   b. Ability to work in a group
   c. Ability to interact with peers and adults
   d. Ability to accept responsibility at his/her level

Achievement Level	Actual Grade Placement

C. At what level in the school curriculum is my child presently functioning?

1. Teacher Judgment:
   a. Languages
   b. Readings
   c. Arithmetic
   d. Writing
   e. Spelling
   f. General Comprehension
   g. Social Studies
   h. Science

Special Education Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Others

3. What is Presently Being Done"

A. What person(s) is responsible for the instructional program in the following subject areas:

1 Curriculum:
   a. Language
   b. Reading
   c. Arithmetic
   d. Writing
   e. Spelling
   f. General Comprehension
   g. Social Studies
   h. Science

Special Education Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Others

B. What person(s) is responsible for the maturity development program?

1. Maturity Development:
   a. Ability to work independently
   b. Ability to work in a group
   c. Ability to interact with peers and adults
   d. Ability to accept responsibility at his/her level

C. What person(s) is responsible for writing and communicating to the parents the specific learning objectives (short term) in each subject area?

1. Curriculum:
   a. Language
   b. Reading
   c. Arithmetic
   d. Writing
   e. Spelling
   f. General Comprehension
   g. Social Studies
   h. Science

D. What person(s) is responsible for developing and communicating to the parents the learning objectives (long term) in each subject area?

1. Curriculum:
   a. Language
   b. Reading
   c. Arithmetic
   d. Writing
   e. Spelling
   f. General Comprehension
   g. Social Studies
   h. Science

Functioning Level	Expected Level	Estimated Growth in One Year

4. What is my Child's Anticipated Growth Rate and Ability Level?

   A. What will be my child's expected growth rate?

      1. Skill Development:
         a. Language
         b. Reading
         c. Arithmetic
         d. Writing
         e. Spelling

      2. Content Development:
         a. General Comprehension
         b. Social Studies
         c. Science

      3. Maturity Development:
         a. Ability to work independently
         b. Ability to work in a group
         c. Ability to interact with peers and adults
         d. Ability to accept responsibility at his/her level

We hope that you will bring this form and any additional questions you might have to our next meeting. We want to share any information that you wish to have.

Messineo, Louis and Phillip J. Sleeman, "A Parents Guide to Special Education," International Journal of Instructional Media, Vol. 4(4), 1976-77, pp. 364-368. (Published by Baywood Publishing Co., Inc., 120 Marine Street, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735)